

Jonah

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<https://www.sefaria.org/Jonah>

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-THE JPS TANAKH: Gender-Sensitive Edition

-<https://jps.org/books/the-jps-tanakh-gender-sensitive-edition/>

Jonah

## Chapter 1

The word of G OD came to Jonah a Jonah Mentioned in 2 Kings 14.25. son of Amittai:

Go at once to Nineveh, that great city, and proclaim judgment upon it; for their wickedness has come before Me.

Jonah, however, started out to flee to Tarshish from G OD 's service. He went down to Joppa and found a ship going to Tarshish. He paid the fare and went aboard to sail with the others to Tarshish, away from G OD 's service.

But G OD cast a mighty wind upon the sea, and such a great tempest came upon the sea that the ship was in danger of breaking up.

In their fright, the sailors cried out, each to his own god; and they flung the ship's cargo overboard to make it lighter for them. Jonah, meanwhile, had gone down into the hold of the vessel where he lay down and fell asleep.

The captain went over to him and cried out, "How can you be sleeping so soundly! Up, call upon your god! Perhaps the god will be kind to us and we will not perish."

Those aboard b Those aboard Heb. "They." said to one another, "Let us cast lots and find out on whose account this misfortune has come upon us." They cast lots and the lot fell on Jonah.

They said to him, "Tell us, you who have brought this misfortune upon us, what is your business? Where have you come from? What is your country, and of what people are you?"

"I am a Hebrew," he replied. "I worship the E TERNAL, the God of Heaven, who made both sea and land."

The men were greatly terrified, and they asked him, "What have you done?" And when the men learned that he was fleeing from G OD 's service—for so he told them—

they said to him, "What must we do to you to make the sea calm around us?" For the sea was growing more and more stormy.

He answered, "Heave me overboard, and the sea will calm down for you; for I know that this terrible storm came upon you on my account."

Nevertheless, the men rowed hard to regain the shore, but they could not, for the sea was growing more and more stormy about them.

Then they cried out to G OD : "Oh, please, E TERNAL One, do not let us perish on account of this man's life. Do not hold us guilty of killing an innocent person! For You, O E TERNAL One, by Your will, have brought this about."

And they heaved Jonah overboard, and the sea stopped raging.

The men feared G OD greatly; they offered a sacrifice to G OD and they made vows.

## Chapter 2

G OD

provided a huge fish to swallow Jonah; and Jonah remained in the fish's belly three days and three nights.

Jonah prayed to the ETERNAL his God from the belly of the fish.

He said: In my trouble I called to GOD, Who answered me; From the belly of Sheol I cried out, And You heard my voice.

You cast me into the depths, Into the heart of the sea, The floods engulfed me; All Your breakers and billows Swept over me.

I thought I was driven away Out of Your sight: Would I ever gaze again Upon Your holy temple?

The waters closed in over me, The deep engulfed me. Weeds twined around my head.

I sank to the base of the mountains; The bars of the earth closed upon me forever. Yet You brought my life up from the pit, My ETERNAL God!

When my life was ebbing away, I called GOD to mind; And my prayer came before You, Into Your holy temple.

They who cling to empty folly Forsake their own welfare, a welfare Meaning of Heb. uncertain.

But I, with loud thanksgiving, Will sacrifice to You; What I have vowed I will perform. Deliverance is GOD's!

GOD

commanded the fish, and it spewed Jonah out upon dry land.

### Chapter 3

The word of GOD came to Jonah a second time:

"Go at once to Nineveh, that great city, and proclaim to it what I tell you."

Jonah went at once to Nineveh in accordance with GOD's command. Nineveh was an enormously large city a an enormously large city Lit. "a large city of God." a three days' walk across.

Jonah started out and made his way into the city the distance of one day's walk, and proclaimed: "Forty days more, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!"

The people of Nineveh believed God. They proclaimed a fast, and great and small alike put on sackcloth.

When the news reached the king of Nineveh, he rose from his throne, took off his robe, put on sackcloth, and sat in ashes.

And he had the word cried through Nineveh: "By decree of the king and his nobles: No human or animal-of flock or herd-shall taste anything! They shall not graze, and they shall not drink water!

They shall be covered with sackcloth-human and animal-and shall cry mightily to God. Let everyone turn back from their own evil ways and from the injustice of which they are guilty.

Who knows but that God may turn and relent? [God] may turn back from wrathfulness, so that we do not perish."

God saw what they did, how they were turning back from their evil ways. And God renounced the punishment that had been planned for them, and did not carry it out.

### Chapter 4

This displeased Jonah greatly, and he was grieved.

He prayed to GOD, saying, "O ETERNAL One! Isn't this just what I said when I was still in my own country? That is why I fled beforehand to Tarshish. For I know that You are a compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in kindness, renouncing punishment.

Please, ETERNAL One, take my life, for I would rather die than live."

GOD replied, "Are you that deeply grieved?"

Now Jonah had left the city and found a place east of the city. He made a booth there and sat under it in the shade, until he should see what happened to the city.

The ETERNAL God provided a *ricinus* plant, a *ricinus* plant Meaning of Heb. uncertain; in contrast to others "gourd." which grew up over Jonah, to provide shade for his head and save him from discomfort. Jonah was very happy about the plant.

But the next day at dawn God provided a worm, which attacked the plant so that it withered.

And when the sun rose, God provided a sultry b sultry Meaning of Heb. uncertain. east wind; the sun beat down on Jonah's head, and he became faint. He begged for death, saying, "I would rather die than live."

Then God said to Jonah, "Are you so deeply grieved about the plant?"

"Yes," he replied, "so deeply that I want to die."

Then GOD said: "You cared about the plant, which you did not work for and which you did not grow, which appeared overnight and perished overnight.

And should not I care about Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand persons who do not yet know their right hand from their left, and many animals as well!" c I.e., infants and animals are not held responsible for their actions.